

Message Text

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO WHITE HOUSE IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 160517

NODIS

WHITE HOUSE FOR BRZEZINSKI

FOLLOWING REPEAT TEL AVIV 5028 SENT ACTION SECSTATE 11 JUL 77

QUOTE C O N F I D E N T I A L TEL AVIV 5028

NODIS

REF: STATE 159150

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PGOV, IS, US, XF

SUBJECT: SECRETARY'S VISIT TO THE MIDDLE EAST

REF: STATE 159150

BEGIN SUMMARY: DAYAN REPEATED THE POINT BEGIN MADE TO
ME LAST FRIDAY THAT A VISIT BY THE SECRETARY TO ISRAEL
THE LATTER PART OF JULY WOULD BE TOO SOON AFTER THE BEGIN
VISIT TO WASHINGTON. HE SAID HE SEES TWO TRACKS OUR
EFFORTS MIGHT FOLLOW IN THE WEEKS AHEAD: THE U.S. PUSHES
AHEAD RAPIDLY WITH EFFORTS TO RECONVENE MIDDLE EAST
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NEGOTIATIONS AS SOON AS POSSIBLE, OR WE SLOW THE PACE
A BIT. DAYAN OBVIOUSLY WISHES THERE WERE SOME WAY FOR
US TO HAVE FURTHER DISCUSSIONS WITH ISRAEL--AND PARTICULARLY
WITH HIM--BEFORE TALKING TO THE ARABS, BECAUSE "BEGIN
WILL SPEAK IN WASHINGTON ONLY IN GENERAL TERMS" HE
REITERATED THAT ISRAEL IS EAGER TO PROCEED AS QUICKLY
AS POSSIBLE TO OVERALL NEGOTIATIONS AND IS NOT

TRYING TO BUY TIME, END SUMMARY.

1. I MET WITH DAYAN JULY 11 FOR REVIEW OF BIDDING BEFORE MY DEPARTURE FOR U.S. I TOLD HIM THAT ALTHOUGH NO FINAL DECISION WOULD BE REACHED UNTIL AFTER THE BEGIN/CARTER MEETINGS, THE SECRETARY'S TENTATIVE SCHEDULE CALLED FOR A VISIT TO THE MIDDLE EAST BETWEEN ABOUT JULY 27 AND AUGUST 10. I ASKED WHETHER THERE WERE DATES THAT SHOULD BE AVOIDED FROM ISRAEL'S POINT OF VIEW. DAYAN REPLIED THERE WERE NO TECHNICAL PROBLEMS AND THE ONLY DATES THAT CAUSE THE ISRAELIS DIFFICULTIES AND SHOULD BE AVOIDED WOULD BE THE SABBATH DAYS (I.E., FROM SUNDOWN FRIDAYS UNTIL SUNDOWN SATURDAYS).

2. HE WENT ON TO SAY THAT ANY PROBLEMS WILL NOT BE TECHNICAL ONES, AND ASKED WHAT THE SECRETARY WOULD EXPECT TO LEARN IN JERUSALEM A FEW DAYS AFTER HAVING SEEN BEGIN IN WASHINGTON. I REPLIED THAT THE SECRETARY WOULD SURELY UNDERSTAND IF THE PRIME MINISTER NEEDS TIME TO CONSULT WITH HIS COLLEAGUES AFTER HIS RETURN JULY 25, AND THAT THE SECRETARY MIGHT FIND IT BEST TO GO FIRST TO THE ARAB STATES, THEN TO COME TO ISRAEL, WITH PERHAPS A RETURN VISIT TO THE ARAB CAPITALS AND TO JERUSALEM.

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3. DAYAN SAID HE SEES TWO POSSIBILITIES AHEAD. ONE IS THAT THE U.S. DETERMINES AFTER BEGIN'S WASHINGTON VISIT THAT IT REALLY WANTS TO GO AHEAD RAPIDLY WITH ITS EFFORTS TO GET THE PARTIES TOGETHER FOR NEGOTIATIONS. THIS WILL REQUIRE INTENSIVE EFFORTS IN JERUSALEM, WASHINGTON AND THE ARAB CAPITALS. THE OTHER POSSIBILITY IS THAT THE U.S. WILL DECIDE IT WOULD BE WISER "TO TAKE IT A BIT SLOWER." HE SAID BEGIN IS PREPARED FOR THE FIRST OF THESE TWO POSSIBILITIES. I SAID I KNEW WASHINGTON PREFERS THAT COURSE ALSO AND I THOUGHT THAT THE ARAB GOVERNMENTS DO AS WELL.

4. DAYAN SAID THAT IF IT IS THE FIRST TRACK AND THE U.S. AND THE ARABS ARE REALLY SERIOUS, THEN IT WILL BE NECESSARY TO GET TO WORK ON THE DETAILS. BEGIN'S CONVERSATIONS IN WASHINGTON WILL BE INEVITABLY SOMEWHAT GENERAL, AND THIS MAY MAKE IT DIFFICULT TO JUMP RIGHT IN TO MOVE TOWARD EARLY CONVENING OF GENEVA. (BY IMPLICATION, DAYAN WAS SAYING THAT WITHOUT HIS BEING PRESENT, IT WOULD BE DIFFICULT FOR THE WASHINGTON MEETING TO GET DOWN TO A DISCUSSION OF BRASS TACKS ON PREPARATIONS FOR GENEVA.)

5. I AGREED THAT THE TWO POSSIBILITIES EXIST BUT SAID THAT WE REMAINED ANXIOUS TO PRESS AHEAD. TO MOVE AHEAD QUICKLY, THE SECRETARY'S TRIP MAY BECOME EXTREMELY IMPORTANT FOR DETAILED CONSULTATIONS. EVEN IF WE WERE TO OPT FOR A SLOWER PACE, THE SECRETARY'S TRIP WILL ALSO BE IMPORTANT BECAUSE WE MUST SAY SOMETHING SOON TO THE ARABS. DAYAN ASKED AGAIN, AS HE DID THE LAST TIME WE MET, WHETHER IT MIGHT NOT BE BETTER TO PLAN FOR DETAILED CONSULTATIONS IN WASHINGTON IN ORDER TO INVOLVE THE PRESIDENT DIRECTLY IN THE DECISION-MAKING. I REPLIED THAT THE SECRETARY WILL COME WITH A FULL UNDERSTANDING OF THE PRESIDENT'S VIEWS AND AN AMPLE MANDATE FOR CONFIDENTIAL

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THE CONSULTATIONS.

6. DAYAN SAID THAT IF VANCE WERE TO BEGIN HIS TRIP IN ISRAEL ON THE 27TH THAT WOULD BE FAR TOO EARLY IF BEGIN RETURNS ONLY ON THE 25TH; IT WOULD BE BETTER FOR THE SECRETARY TO COME TO JERUSALEM AFTER THE ARAB CAPITALS. HE POINTED OUT THAT BEGIN WILL NEED AT LEAST A WEEK TO REST, FACE CABINET AND KNESSET DISCUSSIONS ON HIS WASHINGTON VISIT, AND COMPLETE HIS NEGOTIATIONS WITH THE DMC. I SAID THAT APPEARED TO SUGGEST THE SECRETARY'S VISIT HERE MIGHT PERHAPS BE IN THE FRAMEWORK OF AUGUST 1-3.

7. DAYAN THEN RETURNED TO HIS PREVIOUS POINT AND ASKED WHETHER THE SECRETARY WOULD HAVE A CLEAR MESSAGE TO TAKE TO THE ARABS AFTER BEGIN'S VISIT. HE SAID HE PERSONALLY WAS OF THE OPINION THAT THE SECRETARY SHOULD NOT VISIT ARAB CAPITALS UNTIL THERE HAD BEEN FURTHER CONSULTATIONS WITH THE ISRAELIS. HE POINTED OUT THAT THE PRIME MINISTER WILL HAVE NO MILITARY ADVISER OR REPRESENTATIVE FROM THE MFA AND "WILL SPEAK TO THE PRESIDENT ONLY IN GENERAL TERMS." THE ABSENCE OF A GROUP OF ADVISERS WOULD MAKE IT NECESSARY TO HAVE MORE DETAILED DISCUSSIONS WITH US LATER.

8. I SAID THAT IT MIGHT BE BEST FOR THE SECRETARY TO MAKE A PRELIMINARY VISIT TO THE ARAB CAPITALS IN ORDER TO DISUCSS THE GENERAL ATMOSPHERE OF THE BEGIN VISIT. HE COULD THEN COME TO JERUSALEM FOR DETAILED TALKS AFTER BEGIN HAD REPORTED AND CONSULTED ON HIS WASHINGTON CONVERSATIONS. THESE CONSULTATIONS COULD BE FOLLOWED BY A RETURN TO ARAB CAPITALS, AND PERHAPS A SECOND STOP IN JERUSALEM IF NECESSARY. CONFIDENTIAL

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9. I PROBED TO SEE WHETHER DAYAN WANTED TO GIVE ANY ADVANCE INFORMATION ABOUT THE SUBSTANCE OF THE PROPOSALS BEGIN HOPES TO CARRY TO THE PRESIDENT. HE POLITELY DECLINED TO BE DRAWN OUT.

10. IN CONCLUDING, DAYAN REPEATED THAT IT MUST CLEARLY BE UNDERSTOOD THAT ISRAEL IS READY TO GO ALL THE WAY. IT IS NOT TRYING TO STALL OR BUY TIME, BUT IS ANXIOUS TO SEE WHAT CAN BE DONE NOW TO SOLVE ITS PROBLEMS WITH ITS NEIGHBORS, ESPECIALLY WITH EGYPT.

11. COMMENT: DAYAN IS GENUINELY UNEASY ABOUT THE TIMING OF THE SECRETARY'S VISIT. ON THE ONE HAND, HE SOUGHT TO REASSURE ME THAT ISRAEL IS ANXIOUS TO PROCEED AS QUICKLY AS POSSIBLE TO MEANINGFUL NEGOTIATIONS. ON THE OTHER HAND, HE MENTIONED THE TWO TRACKS WE MIGHT WANT TO CONSIDER, AND HINTED BROADLY AT THE LIKELIHOOD THAT BEGIN'S CONVERSATIONS IN WASHINGTON MIGHT NOT BE SPECIFIC ENOUGH TO PROVIDE SUBSTANCE FOR A MESSAGE THE SECRETARY MIGHT CARRY TO THE ARABS WITHOUT BEING FLESHED OUT IN FURTHER TALKS HERE. MY JUDGEMENT IS THAT HE WOULD LIKE US TO SUGGEST A POSTPONEMENT--HE DOESN'T WANT ISRAEL TO APPEAR TO BE DRAGGING ITS FEET, BUT HE IS CONCERNED AT THE PROXIMITY OF THE PROPOSED VANCE VISIT TO THE CONCLUSION OF BEGIN'S TRIP. HE ALSO IS OBVIOUSLY NOT ENTHUSIASTIC ABOUT MORE SHUTTLE DIPLOMACY, MUCH PREFERING TO NEGOTIATE IN WASHINGTON IF IT WERE POSSIBLE TO DO SO.
LEWIS

UNQUOTE VANCE

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